

ERIC JAMES HEIL
RICO TOWN MANAGER AND ATTORNEY

4-4-00

Monica Heimdal
Region VIII ENF-T
999 18th Street, Suite 500
Denver, CO 80202-2466

RE: St. Louis Tunnel settling ponds

Hi Monica,

Enclosed are photos taken on Sunday, March 26th of the upper most settling pond for the St. Louis tunnel discharge breaching into the Dolores River. Again, I'm expressing concern that total abandonment of maintaining the settling ponds is not only jeopardizing their effectiveness but also their very integrity. Spring run-off will be occurring in the next several weeks. I believe the situation requires immediate attention in order to protect this priority one classification stretch of river.

In addition, we like to schedule a community meeting with EPA and State officials, and State representatives if possible, sometime in June to discuss the current situation and progress of the Dept. of Justice action. Please let me know if you or other EPA representatives would be willing to attend. Finally, the Town is beginning to work with a local water shed forum. I believe it would be very beneficial to institute a more complete sampling and monitoring program around Rico which would collect data during high and low flows at different times of the year. Besides the mine pollution, Rico is the only significant private land area in the upper east fork of the Dolores watershed so most potential growth impacts to the river will probably occur in this area.

Finally, I've enclosed a recent article I read regarding pollution permit monitoring and enforcement.

Thanks for your consideration.



Eric James Heil

Cc: Annette Quill, Attorney General's Office
Greg Brandt, CDOHE
Governor Owen's Office
Kay Alexander, State Representative
Jim Dyer, State Senator
Rico Town Board of Trustees

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